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ABSTRACT

Kingborough Community College's (KCC's) New Start Program was initiated in 1985 to give students who were unsuccessful at senior colleges a second chance at higher education. Following a very successful first year during which retention and academic performance were significantly improved, the New Start Program was expanded from 63 to 240 students for the 1986-87 academic year. During 1986-87, Queens College and the College of Staten Island joined Brooklyn College in referring students who were about to be dismissed to KCC's New Start program. Students who elected to participate in the program were admitted to KCC in good standing, assigned a counselor to assist them, and allowed to use up to 30 previous credits toward a KCC degree. By June 1987, over 80% of the students in the program had either earned college degrees or were still actively working toward them. The median grade point average (GPA) for the 1986-87 participants was 2.41, and the median rate of course completion was 92%. Over 25% of the students had a cumulative GPA above 3.00, and close to half had 100% rates of course completion. Appended tables include data on: (1) enrollment by semester; (2) participants' curricula at KCC; (3) KCC entrance test scores; (4) median GPA by entrance date; (5) GPA by previous college; (6) rates of completion by previous college; (7) enrollment status; and (8) student demographic data. (Author/PAA)

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Kingsborough Community College
of
The City University of New York

NEW START PROGRAM
SECOND-YEAR REPORT

Prepared by
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June, 1987

JC 870354

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Abstract

Kingsborough Community College's New Start Program, designed to give a second chance at higher education to students who were unsuccessful at senior colleges, has completed its second year. A total of 240 students have entered the program from the participating senior colleges (Brooklyn College, Queens College, and the College of Staten Island). As of June, 1987, over 80% of these students either had earned college degrees or were still actively working toward them. Very few were found to be having academic difficulty again; the median grade point average for the 1986-87 participants was 2.41, and the median rate of completion was 92%. Over one fourth of this group had cumulative grade point averages over 3.00, and nearly half had perfect (100%) rates of completion.

The appropriateness of the program for students from associate degree programs at other colleges was considered, and it was found that many of those students did not appear to benefit from the program as much as do those from baccalaureate programs.

For the 1987-88 academic year, additional participating senior colleges will be Hunter College, John Jay College, Lehman College, SUNY Maritime College, and Adelphi University.

The New Start Program at Kingsborough Community College began in September, 1985. During that academic year the program's participants consisted of 63 students who had not done well at Brooklyn College but chose to take advantage of the opportunity to continue their education at Kingsborough. This group proved to be so highly motivated to improve on their past performance that they showed remarkable rates of retention and academic achievement (Winchell, 1986).

As a result of its first-year success, the New Start Program was expanded for the 1986-87 academic year to include students from Queens College and the College of Staten Island as well as from Brooklyn College. As was done in the previous year, the cooperating senior colleges referred to New Start those students they were about to dismiss. Students who elected to participate were admitted to Kingsborough in good standing and assigned a counselor to assist them; each student could use up to 30 previous college credits toward a Kingsborough degree, and the previous grade point averages were not carried over.

Enrollment

The enrollment figures for New Start since September, 1985, are presented in Table 1. A total of 240 students have participated in the program, and enrollment has increased every semester.

In September, 1986, 37 of the original group from Brooklyn College were still at Kingsborough and were joined by 127 new students (84 from Brooklyn College, 37 from College of Staten Island, and 6 from Queens College). For Spring '87, a student from the original group was readmitted after a semester's absence and 50 new students (47 from Brooklyn, 3 from Queens) were admitted. The participating senior colleges generally do not dismiss students in mid-year, so the new Spring '87 students consisted mostly of those who had deferred admission from the previous semester.

More than half of the total number of New Start students have chosen to major in business administration, liberal arts, or accounting at Kingsborough. The complete list of their curriculum choices is included in Table 2.

Before coming to Kingsborough, most of the New Start students had passed all three CUNY proficiency tests for basic skill levels in mathematics, reading, and writing. As indicated in Table 3, 90.4% had passed the reading test, 85.8% had passed math, and 75.4 had passed writing; most of those who still needed writing remediation had been in "English as a Second Language" programs at their previous colleges.

Academic Performance and Other Outcomes

The 215 students who participated in New Start during the 1986-87 academic year were, like last year's New Start students, generally quite successful academically.

The City University evaluates academic performance in terms of grade point average and percentage of completion of credits attempted (rate of completion). By the time a student has attempted 36 credits, he or she is required to have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 and a rate of completion of at least 75% to remain in good academic standing. Most of the 1986-87 New Start students performed well above these standards: As of June, 1987, their median grade point average was 2.41, and their median rate of completion was 92% (see Table 4). The subgroup with the highest median average (2.61) were the 38 students who entered Kingsborough during the first year of the program. The only subgroup that, on the average, did not do well were the 19 students who entered in September, 1986, and did not return for the Spring semester; their median average was 1.50 and rate of completion was 68%. As indicated in Tables 5 and 6, over one-fourth of the 1986-87 New Start students had cumulative grade point averages over 3.00, and nearly half had perfect (100%) rates of completion.

When the grade point average and rate of completion data were grouped according to previous college, as shown in Tables 5 and 6, it was apparent that students from the College of Staten Island were having more difficulty benefitting from the program than were those from Brooklyn or Queens Colleges. Whereas the median grade point average for the 9 former Queens students was 2.60 and the 169 former Brooklyn students

was 2.52, the median for the former Staten Island students was 1.87. Likewise, the median rate of completion was 100% for Queens, 98% for Brooklyn, and 74% for Staten Island. When the Staten Island students' difficulties became apparent, it was discovered that all but one of these 37 students had been dismissed from Staten Island's associate, rather than baccalaureate, degree programs. This issue will be discussed further in the next section of this report.

The current enrollment status of the 240 students who have participated in New Start since its inception is reported in Table 7. Approximately 11.7% are known to have graduated from Kingsborough, transferred to senior colleges, and/or earned readmission to their previous senior colleges. Another 68.8% were still at Kingsborough at the end of Spring '87 and had registered for summer school and/or preregistered for fall; this category includes at least 15 candidates for August, 1987, graduation. During the entire two years of the program, only one student in eight (12.5%) has dropped out or stopped out of Kingsborough, and only 7.1% were dismissed. The dropout figure actually may be lower than that listed in Table 7, because some of those students may have transferred to other colleges or been readmitted to previous colleges after leaving Kingsborough.

As of Spring '87, graduates of the program were known to be working toward baccalaureate degrees at the following institutions: Baruch College, Brooklyn College, Hunter College, College of Staten Island, York College, the CUNY Baccaleaureate Program, SUNY College at Brockport, SUNY College at Cortland, C.W. Post College, St. John's

University, and the University of Bridgeport. Almost all New Start graduates have decided to continue their education after Kingsborough, and so far every one who has applied has been accepted by at least one senior college.

Discussion

This year's statistics confirm that the New Start Program indeed enables many students to attain their educational goals: At the end of the program's first two years, 80.5% of its participants - 193 students who otherwise would not have been able to continue in college - either had earned college degrees or were still actively working toward them. These students are to be commended for their motivation and persistence.

The one area of current concern in the program is the fact that, at the end of their first year at Kingsborough, more than half of the former Staten Island students once again are in academic difficulty. Efforts are being made to provide closer monitoring and more intensive counseling for these students and to assist those in imminent danger of being dismissed to find other educational and career alternatives.

From the experience with the students from Staten Island's associate degree programs, some inferences can be drawn about what factors may be particularly important contributors to New Start students' success. At the end of the program's first year, it had been suggested that a major factor was the students' basic skill levels, as measured by the CUNY Skills Assessment Tests. But, as can be seen in Table 3, the Staten Island students were very similar to the overall group with respect to

these. Nor did they differ much from the other participants with respect to age: Like most of the others who entered Kingsborough during the past academic year, most of the Staten Island students were in their early twenties when they enrolled here (see Table 8). Although motivation undoubtedly is an important ingredient for academic success, motivation alone does not appear to be the determining factor: The participants from all three colleges were those who elected to enroll in the program despite their earlier academic failures.

It appears that two more useful explanatory factors might be (a) the difference in admission criteria between associate and baccalaureate programs and (b) certain differences between campuses which have associate programs and those which do not. Whereas in the City University of New York a high school diploma or equivalency is sufficient for admission to most associate programs, the prerequisite for freshman admission to baccalaureate programs ordinarily is a high school average of at least 80% or a comparable equivalency score. Thus most New Start students have histories of levels of academic achievement that presumably go beyond the basic skills measured by the CUNY Skills Assessment Tests. Second, the City University campuses which have associate degree programs, such as Kingsborough and the College of Staten Island, generally offer more extensive counseling and academic support systems than do baccalaureate-and-above campuses such as Brooklyn and Queens Colleges. In counseling interviews, former Brooklyn and Queens students often mentioned that they found Kingsborough's relatively small class sizes and/or accessability of counseling and tutorial assistance particularly helpful. The change to a

college with more support services, including a counseling program geared specifically to their needs (see Winchell, 1986, for description), seems to be more beneficial to students who come from senior colleges where these are less available.

Research with additional New Start students in the future should shed more light on the factors which contribute to success in the program.

Future Development

The New Start Program is well established at Kingsborough and has even attracted some attention outside the College. Since Fall '86 it has been one of the City University's Exemplary Programs Projects, and an article about New Start appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education (Greene, 1986); the article is reproduced in Appendix A.

For Fall '87, the participating senior colleges will include, in addition to the previous three, three additional CUNY colleges (Hunter, John Jay, and Lehman) as well as a State University of New York college (Maritime) and a private university (Adelphi). Appendix B is a fact sheet about the program.

References

Greene, E. (1986, December 10). Two-year college in Brooklyn offers new start to students on verge of flunking elsewhere. Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. 29, 32.

Winchell, A. (1986). New Start Program Report: September, 1985 - June, 1986. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Kingsborough Community College. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 278 442)

Table 1
New Start Program Enrollment by Semester

Semester	Previous College: Brooklyn	Staten Island	Queens	Total
Fall '85				
enrollment	51	-	-	51
(entering/continuing)	(51/-)			(51/-)
Spring '86				
enrollment	55	-	-	55
(entering/continuing)	(12/43)			(12/43)
Fall '86				
enrollment	121	37	6	164
(entering/continuing)	(84/37)	(37/-)	(6/-)	(127/37)
Spring '87				
enrollment	150	28	8	186
(entering/continuing)	(47/103[a])	(0/28)	(3/5)	(50/136)
Total participants	194	37	9	240

[a]includes one student who was readmitted after a semester's absence

Table 2
New Start Students' Curricula at KCC

Curriculum	Previous College				
	Brooklyn (n=194)	Staten Island (n=37)	Queens (n=9)	Total (n=240)	%
Business Administration	43	13	1	57	23.8
Liberal Arts	43	4	1	48	20.0
Accounting	28	3	1	32	13.3
Data Processing	9	3	1	13	5.4
Biology	9	1	2	12	5.0
Nursing/Pre-Nursing	9	3	0	12	5.0
Marketing Management	9	1	0	10	4.2
Computer Science	5	2	2	9	3.8
Early Childhood Ed.	7	1	0	8	3.3
Broadcasting	6	0	0	6	2.5
Mathematics	4	1	0	5	2.1
Pre-Physical Therapy	4	1	0	5	2.1
Secretarial/Office Adm.	4	1	0	5	2.1
Chemistry	3	0	1	4	1.7
Sports, Fitness & Rec.	3	0	0	3	1.2
Travel & Tourism	3	0	0	3	1.2
Physics	1	1	0	2	0.8
Personnel & Labor Rel.	1	1	0	2	0.8
Fine Arts	1	0	0	1	0.4
Music	1	0	0	1	0.4
Journalism	0	1	0	1	0.4
Fashion Merchandising	1	0	0	1	0.4

Table 3
New Start Students' CUNY Skills Assessment Levels (Entering KCC)

	Previous College				
	Brooklyn (n=194)	Staten Island (n=37)	Queens (n=9)	Total (n=240)	%
Math					
Passed	168	29	9	206	85.8
Self-study	16	2	0	18	7.5
MAT R2	4	4	0	8	3.3
MAT M1	4	1	0	5	2.1
Exempt/No score	2	1	0	3	1.3
Reading					
Passed	176	32	9	217	90.4
ENG 04	12	3	0	15	6.3
ENG 03	4	2	0	6	2.5
Exempt/No score	2	0	0	2	0.8
Writing					
Passed	147	26	8	181	75.4
ENG C2	31	7	0	38	15.8
ENG C1	14	4	1	19	7.9
Exempt/No score	2	0	0	2	0.8

Table 4
1986-87 New Start Students' Median Cumulative Grade Point Averages and Rates of Completion as of 6/87

Semesters entered/attended	No. of students	Median GPA	Median rate
Entered before Fall '86	38	2.61	91%
Entered Fall '86			
attended F'86 -S'87	108	2.47	93%
attended F'86 only	19	1.50	68%
Entered Spr.'87	50	2.36	100%
Combined	215	2.41	92%

Table 5
1986-87 New Start Students' Cumulative Grade Point Averages as of June, 1987, by Previous College

GPA	Previous College: Brooklyn (n=169)	Staten Island (n=37)	Queens (n=9)	Total (n=215)	%
3.00 and above	55	1	3	59	27.4
2.00-2.99	64	15	3	82	38.1
below 2.00	48	20	3	71	33.0
no GPA (withdrew officially)	2	1	0	3	1.4
Students on Dean's List	10	1	0	11	5.1
median GPA	2.52	1.87	2.60	2.41	

Table 6
1986-87 New Start Students' Cumulative Rates of Completion as of June, 1987, by Previous College

Rate of Completion	Previous College: Brooklyn (n=169)	Staten Island (n=37)	Queens (n=9)	Total (n=215)	%
100%	84	9	5	98	45.6
75-99%	51	9	2	62	28.8
50-74%	19	10	2	31	14.4
below 50%	15	9	0	24	11.2
median rate of completion	98	74	100	92	

Table 7
Enrollment Status of New Start Students as of End of Spring '87

Status	Previous College: Brooklyn ent.'85-86 (n=63)	Brooklyn ent.'86-87 (n=131)	Staten Island (n=37)	Queens (n=9)	Total (n=240)	%
grad.[a]	21	4	3	0	28	11.7
cont.[b]	21	116	20	8	165	68.8
drop.[c]	11	9	9	1	30	12.5
dism.[d]	10	2	5	0	17	7.1

[a] graduated and/or known to have transferred to senior colleges

[b] continuing at KCC (includes candidates for 8/87 graduation)

[c] dropped out/stopped out from KCC (may include some who transferred to other colleges)

[d] dismissed from KCC (includes dismissals for 9/87)

Table 8
Demographic Information for New Start Students Who Entered KCC in Fall '86 and Spring '87

Year of birth	Previous College: Brooklyn (n=131)	Staten Island (n=37)	Queens (n=9)	Total (n=177)	%
1970	1	0	0	1	0.6
1969	3	0	0	3	1.7
1968	10	0	0	10	5.6
1967	17	1	5	23	13.0
1966	35	6	2	43	24.3
1965	19	15	0	34	19.2
1964	9	3	1	13	7.3
1963	3	4	0	7	4.0
1962	5	2	1	8	4.5
1961	3	1	0	4	2.3
1960	1	2	0	3	1.7
1955-59	8	2	0	10	5.6
1950-54	1	1	0	2	1.1
1945-49	2	0	0	2	1.1
1940-44	1	0	0	1	0.6
Not available	13	0	0	13	7.3
Gender					
male	79	25	8	112	63.3
female	52	12	1	65	36.7

Appendix A

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Students

2-Year College in Brooklyn Offers New Start to Students on Verge of Flunking Elsewhere

Innovative program permits enrollment in good standing and ignores previously failed courses

PHOTOGRAPH FOR THE CHRONICLE BY DEB HARRISON

Two New Start students on Kingsborough Community College's beachfront campus: "It really opened a shut door," says Irving Ramos; "It's been fantastic," echoes Patricia Charles.

By ELIZABETH GREENE
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Irving Ramos smiles big when he sizes up his experience at Kingsborough Community College, comparing it to a boy's first encounter with requited love.

Mr. Ramos, who flunked out of Brooklyn College, has been given a second chance at higher education through an innovative program now in its second year at Kingsborough.

And he is doing well.

"It's like her saying 'Yes,' " the 21-year-old says.

New Start, a program designed to improve retention within the City University of New York system, allows students on the verge of being dismissed on academic grounds from any of three participating senior colleges to enroll in Kingsborough as students in good standing.

Only their new grades are included in their Kingsborough average, but up to 30 credits from their previous record can be transferred toward attaining the associate degree the college offers—almost half the credits needed, for some majors.

Like any other CUNY community-college graduate, they are then guaranteed admission to the senior college of their choice—with the exception of the one they had attended previously, and they may appeal for re-entry there.

"It really opened a shut door," Mr. Ramos says. "I'm glad that somebody reached out and said, 'You've got somewhere to go.' "

This year, the program has 141 participants and includes students from three of CUNY's senior colleges—Queens College and the College of Staten Island, as well as Brooklyn.

Leon M. Goldstein, Kingsborough's president, says he designed New Start to keep students from quitting the university system before getting a degree.

In academe, he says, a good deal of thought centers on reducing the dropout rate at one's own college, or on having students progress from community colleges to senior colleges. New Start, which moves people from senior colleges to a community college, provides another means for retaining students.

"I've taken a university perspective," Mr. Goldstein says.

To give New Start students an initial boost, they are given a special orientation

Continued on Page 32, Column 1

2-Year College Offers Students a New Start

Continued from Page 29

and allowed to register early. All are assigned the same counselor—Anne Winchell—who lends support, advises, and helps work out any conflicts. Otherwise, the students are treated like anyone else at Kingsborough. Professors only know which of their students are in New Start if those students choose to tell them.

Regular transfer students, unlike those in New Start, must have a 2.0 grade-point average for non-probationary degree status.

Says Alfred R. Mascolo, dean of instructional services and the program's director, "We're providing a special opportunity for students we thought had potential for success. So far it looks like we were right."

Acutely aware that Kingsborough, an open-admissions college, is probably their last chance at higher education, most New Start students are exceptionally ambitious, taking their work very seriously and attaining high marks. Last year, more than one-fourth of the 63 participants attained cumulative grade-point averages of 3.0 or above. At Brooklyn College—the only participating senior institution at the time—their averages had ranged from 0.83 to 1.79.

Six were awarded associate degrees and accepted at four-year colleges, and at least 14 more are expected to be accepted soon.

"They know what college is about, they know what things are expected of them, and they know from experience what horrible things will happen to them if they don't do these things," says Ms. Winchell, who is also an associate professor of student development. "I think they found getting dismissed a real sobering experience."

Many Not Ready for College

In addition to succeeding academically, Ms. Winchell says, the students tend to be active members of the college community, eagerly taking advantage of extracurricular activities. Mr. Ramos, for example, is qualified to graduate in January, but the broadcasting major has decided to remain in the college until June so he can work at the campus radio station. He is also treasurer of the liberal-arts council.

Because they had to meet certain academic standards for admission into the senior colleges, New Start students are generally people who did relatively well in high school but lost their motivation afterward, Ms. Winchell says. Many were not ready for college at the time they initially enrolled, but went because it was expected of them.

Confused about their goals or just uninterested in academics, they slacked off on their course work and fell behind, some receiving poor grades for the first time in their lives. Eventually, they received a letter from their college telling them they would be dismissed, or warning of such an outcome, and informing them of Kingsborough's program.

Patricia Charles, for example, received A's and B's in high school; at Brooklyn it was C's and D's.

There, uncertain about her career plans, she went from pre-med to economics and psychology.

Only recently has Ms. Charles, 22, realized that she wants to train for a career in retail management. Through New Start, with a major in marketing management, her work has improved considerably.

"Now it's my choice, it's not my parents' choice," she says. "It's my career, and it's a means to an end."

In high school, Ms. Charles and her friends had only disparaging words for "K.C.C.," calling the modernistic college on the Atlantic Ocean (it has its own beach) "Kingsborough Country Club." She says, "I was like, 'Kingsborough, sure.' Only people who were doing D work in high school were going to Kingsborough."

She says she has since discovered that the college has a strong, enthusiastic faculty, offers small classes, and has a stimulating educational atmosphere. "It's been fantastic," she says.

An evaluation team from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools last May awarded high praise to almost every aspect of the college, from its programs to its president. It found that for many students the only complaint was that Kingsborough offered only two years of a baccalaureate degree; they didn't want to leave.

Giving Everyone a Chance

New Start, officials at the college say, is consistent with the goal of any community college: to give everyone a fighting chance.

Says Joel Carver, executive assistant to the president, "If it works here it should work at other places, as long as there's good will to not conduct business as usual."

Gregory Brown, a 20-year-old participant, shakes his head with relief when he sees the progress he has made. If it were not for New Start, he says, he would probably be working full time now in a grocery store.

After getting his associate degree, he expects to enroll in CUNY's Bernard M. Baruch College. His wish, however, is to go to an Ivy League institution, but he fears his previous grades will get in the way. "They'd probably look at my past record and turn me down based on the mistakes I made in my past," he says.

David Safer, 18, says he has gone from not caring about missing classes to going out of his way to get extra help when he needs it. Being in a supportive program, he says, gave him the inspiration he needed.

"It gave me the confidence that I was going to go on, instead of just 'different school, same stuff,' " he says. "Now I have a second chance to go where I should have gone in the first place—in the right direction."

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Appendix B

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OF
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
ORIENTAL BOULEVARD, MANHATTAN BEACH
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11235

NEW START PROGRAM

Fact Sheet

Eligibility

Students whose academic records at participating senior colleges ordinarily would make them ineligible to transfer to Kingsborough in good standing may enter the New Start Program if they have earned no more than 60 college credits previously.

Participating senior colleges are: Brooklyn College, Queens College, College of Staten Island, John Jay College, Hunter College, Lehman College, SUNY Maritime College, and Adelphi University.

Benefits of the Program

New Start participants are admitted to Kingsborough as matriculated students in good standing.

Up to 30 of a New Start student's previously earned credits (including D grades from CUNY colleges) can be used toward an associate degree at Kingsborough.

Grades from previous colleges are not carried over into the Kingsborough cumulative grade point average.

With an associate degree from Kingsborough, a New Start graduate is guaranteed admission to any CUNY senior college other than the college previously attended. (A student who wishes to return to his/her previous college may appeal for readmission there but should check with that college concerning its policies.) New Start graduates have also been accepted at SUNY and private colleges.

Services Available

All participants in the program are assigned a counselor to assist them with academic, career, personal, and transfer questions and concerns.

New Start students whose admission applications are completed at least one month before the start of a semester are entitled to special early registration for their first semester at Kingsborough.

All of the College's tutorial, remedial, and support services are available to New Start students.

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